TWO DISCOURSES INTRODUCTORY TO A DISQUISITION

Demonstrating the

UNLAWFULNESS OF THE MARRIAGE OF Coulin Germans;

From Law, Reason, Scripture, and Antiquity.

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Opinionum commenta delet dies, Naturæ judicia confirmat.

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TO THE

READER.

THE *Deſign of the two following Diſcourſes is expreſs'd in the Title-page, and how they contribute to that Deſign, will be beſt ſeen by the Diſcourſes themſelves. I do profeſs very ſolemnly, whatever Interpretations may be made, either of this Introduction, or of thoſe Diſcourſes which are immediately to follow it; yet I would not, upon any Conſideration whatſoever, have publiſhed my Thoughts upon this Subject, did*

I not think my ſelf obliged in Conſcience to do it; did I not know certainly, that what I am about to write, aims not at the Embroilment, and Diſturbance, but at the Peate of the World; and were I not equally ſure, that all this may be done upon ſuch Principles, as can give no man any reaſonable cauſe of Offence, but on the contrary, ſuch as with which, all Wiſe, and Good Men ought to be extreamly ſatisfied and pleaſed. **Farewel.**

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Of the true Meaning and Intention of the Statute of 32. H. VIII. c. 38.

I. THE Act of Parliament ſtill in force concerning this Affair, which though repealed 1*mo.* & 2*do. Phil.* & *Mar. c.* 8. was again reſtored to its Ancient Power and Authority 1*mo. Elizabethæ c.* 1. is 32. *H.* 8. *c.* 38.

II. In the Preface to that Act there are theſe words concerning the Inconveniencies of Diſpenſations to Marry, which had been uſed in former time to be procured of the Pope, in caſe the Parties concerned were allied to one another in any of the Degrees prohibited by the Canon Law.

'Further alſo by reaſon of other Prohibi-'tions than Gods Law admitteth for their 'Lucre by that Court (*a*) invented, the Diſ-'penſation whereof they always reſerved to 'themſelves, as in Kindred or Affinity be-'tween *Couſin Germans*; and ſo to fourth 'and

(a) *The Court of* Rome.

'and fourth Degree, Carnal Knowledge of 'any of the same Kin or Affinity before in 'such outward Degrees, which else were 'lawful, and be not prohibited by Gods 'Law, and all because they would get Mo-'ney by it, &c.

III. And our late Reverend and Learned Mr. *Hales* in his Miscellaneous Discourses, hath among other things, a Letter to a Friend. in Resolution of this Question concerning the Marriage of *Cousin Germans*, in which he determins on the Affirmative side, with what reason, we shall see in its due place; but that for which I now mentioned his Name, is, that speaking of this Act of Par-
P. 267. Ed. 1673. liament, he saith, 'That amongst the De-'grees specified in that Act as lawful, if his 'Memory fail him not, *Cousin Germans* are 'expresly mentioned.

IV. And his Memory did not fail him, though he made a wrong use of it at this Time; for though it be true that *Cousin Germans* are mentioned in the words above produced by me, as Parties lawfully marriageable with one another, and no ways prohibited by the Law of God, yet it is here to be considered, that this is not the Judgment of the Law it self, but only of the men that made

made it, who may possibly be deceived, as the Articles of our Church oblige us to believe, that even a General Council may err, notwithstanding they lay claim to those Divine Assistances, to which no Parliament ever pretended; for these words are not in the very Act properly and strictly so called, but only in the Preface to it, in which, as in all other Acts of Parliament, the Reasons why that Act was made, are specified and set down; but that which in the true, strict, and legal Propriety is called the Act, and does oblige as the Act and Deed of the King, and his Two Houses in Parliament Assembled, is of necessity to be supposed to begin at these words, *Be it therefore Enacted by the King*, &c. and that only which follows these words (which otherwise would be in vain, and of no signification) is that which passeth an Obligation upon the Subject.

V. It is therefore in the next place to be considered, what that is, which is by this Act of Parliament prohibited, after those words, *Be it Enacted by the King*, &c. and that is expressed in these following words, *That——all and every such Marriages as within this Church of* England, *shall be contracted between lawful Persons (as by this Act we declare all Persons to be lawful,*

that

that be not prohibited by Gods Law, to Marry) such Marriages being contracted and solemnized in the Face of the Church, and consummate with bodily Knowledge, &c. *shall be by Authority of this present Parliament aforesaid, deemed, judged, and taken to be lawful, good, just and indissoluble—— and that no Reservation or Prohibition, Gods Law only excepted, shall trouble or impeach any Marriage without the* Levitical *Degrees.*

VI. So that if we will submit our selves to the Conduct and Guidance of that Clue, which this Act of Parliament hath given us for our Direction, the *Levitical* Degrees, that is to say, the Degrees prohibited or allowed by the Law of *Moses*, are to be the Measures of Liberty and Restraint; and whatsoever Degree the Law of *Moses* forbids, the same is forbidden by the Laws of *England*; and on the contrary, whatsoever Degrees are permitted in the Code of *Moses*, the same are likewise allowed and deemed to be lawful, good, just, and indissoluble by this Act of Parliament, and by the Civil Laws of this Nation.

VII. Whence it is plain, that the true thing to be enquired into for a clear and solid Resolution of this weighty Question concerning

cerning the Marriage of *Couſin Germans*, ſo far as this Act of Parliament is concerned in it, is this; what are thoſe Degrees which are prohibited by the Law of *Moſes*? And if it ſhall appear upon a juſt and impartial Survey of the whole matter, that the Marriage of *Couſin Germans* was abſolutely forbidden, unleſs in a Caſe, which ſhall be mentioned, in which our Age and Nation is not concerned, and in another which neither doth, nor can belong to perſons in a private Capacity and Station, in which Number I include all but Sovereign Princes, or ſuch as have a nigh Relation to the Crown, then it follows unavoidably, that in all ordinary Caſes ſuch Marriages are prohibited by this Act of Parliament.

VIII. Neither will it be ſufficient in this Caſe to ſay, That the King and his Parliament did not intend by this Act to prohibit the Marriage of *Couſin Germans*, but on the contrary, their Intention was certainly to make it lawful, which I do readily grant; yet here, I ſpeak it with all Submiſſion to the Judgment of my betters, there are two ſeveral Intentions to be conſidered, a Particular, and a General; by a particular Intention, as appears by the Preface to the Act, it was deſigned to make it lawful for *Couſin Germans*

mans to Marry, but the general intention consisted in these two things, first they designed to remove all the obstructions of the Canon Law, and to make all those Marriages to be good and Lawful, which had no other barr but that of *Gregory* or *Gratian*, and the Practice of those Courts under the See of *Rome*, to which the Cognizance of Marriages, whether Lawful or Unlawful, appertained.

The second general intention, besides the shaking off the Yoak, and preventing the frauds and abuses of the Bishop of *Rome*, and such as were commissioned by him, was instead of the Canon Law, which made a trade of Incest, and would sell the most grievous sins for a Sum of Money, by adding ἐπὶ κοινῷ to all their prohibitions, *nisi aliter Ecclesia dispenset*, to substitute another measure in its stead, which measure was to be the Law of *Moses*, and therefore whatsoever degrees were forbidden in the *Levitical* Law, or in the unquestionable Practice of the Church of God among the *Jews*, were likewise prohibited, forbidden, and made unlawful by this their second general intention, which being the declared Measure of all particular instances, it is manifest they did intend to bind up, and restrain *Cousin Germans* from Marrying

ing one another, if it ſhould appear at any time hereafter, though it did not then, that all ſuch Marriages were *Levitically* unlawful.

IX. But though this Act of Parliament ſhould in expreſs words, have given a Licence for *Couſin Germans* to Marry, which it is very clear it hath not done, yet upon ſuppoſition that it was prohibited by the Law of God or of Nature, which is no leſs the voice of God then that of Revelation, it would ſtill have remained unlawful, for any Chriſtian Man or Woman to accept of this liberty which the Parliament had given, becauſe in all theſe caſes where the divine Prohibitions interfere with the liberties granted by human Laws, we are to obey God rather then men, and this may be lay'd down as a maxim of undoubted and univerſal truth, that human Laws may if they pleaſe ſtraiten the reſtraints, but they cannot enlarge the liberties of mankind, beyond what the Laws of God or Nature do allow, which, beſides that the thing is very plain in it ſelf, and if it were otherwiſe there could be no ſtable and unalterable Nature of things, but the Nature of vertue and vice might be inverted by the variable humours of different times or men; I ſay, beſides

ſides this, this is no more, than what our *Engliſh* Parliaments have themſelves acknowledg'd, for ſo ſpeaks that Auguſt and Venerable Aſſembly concerning inceſtuous and deteſtable conjunctions which were uſed to be diſpenſed with by the Authority of the See of *Rome*. 25. *H.* 8. *c.* 22. 'Which Marriages albeit they be plainly 'prohibited and deteſted by the Laws of 'God, yet nevertheleſs at ſometimes they 'have proceeded under Colours of diſpen-'ſations, by mans Power which is but u-'ſurped, and of right ought not to be grant-'ed, admitted, ne allowed, for no man of 'what eſtate, degree, or condition ſoever 'he be, hath power to diſpence with Gods 'Laws, as all the Clergy of this Realm— 'and the moſt part of all the famous Univer-'ſities of Chriſtendom, and we alſo do 'affirm and think. Which very words are again repeated upon another occaſion. 28 *H.* 8. *c.* 7. And the Univerſities that did concur in opinion with the Parliament, and Church of *England*, beſides our own, the two moſt Learned and Judicious in the Chriſtian World, were the Univerſities of *Bononia*, *Padua*, *Paris*, *Orleance*, *Toloſe*, *Angiew*, and divers others. 'To which 'were likewiſe added the private writings 'of many right excellent and well Learned

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men. As it is in the ſaid former Act in theſe very words expreſſed and declared, and it is likewiſe further to be conſidered that this very Act of 32 *H.* 8. c. 38. was deſigned only to aboliſh diſannul and repeal the Canon Law, and to make all thoſe Marriages and conjunctions Lawful, which had no other barr, than the canonical Prohibitions, founded upon the ſole Authority of the Pope, without the expreſs warranty of the Scripture it ſelf, but if there be any degrees that were Unlawful upon another account, whether it be of Nature or of revelation, it is the declared intention of this Act of Parliament, not to diſanul theſe Prohibitions, but to confirm them.

X. Which things being laid down and premiſed beforehand, for the greater clearneſs of proceeding in this affair, and it being made thus plain, both what the Law of *England* determins in the caſe, and how far human Laws may be of force or may be complyed with in matters of this Nature; the next thing to be enquired into, is, what the Laws of God in the inſpired Writings either of the Old Teſtament or the New, have determined, or how the light of reaſon, which if appealed to without prejudice or paſſion is the impartial Oracle of

Truth and Justice, will decide this great question, which hath exercised the Wits and Pens of so many Learned men, concerning the Lawfulness, or Unlawfulness of the Marriage of *Cousin Germans*; and that the arguments which I shall produce from the revealed Law of God, may have the greater force, I shall endeavour to shew that Nature and Revelation are consistent to each other, and as I shall undeniably prove that the Marriage of *Cousin Germans* was Prohibited the *Jews*, and by consequence, as I shall make it appear, is in a more especial manner Unlawful to all Christian People, so that we may see, that the reason of these Laws, and consequently their obligation, is eternal, I will make my entrance upon the decision of this controversie, by enquiring how far the Laws of Nature are concerned in it.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Laws of Nature, and the reasons of their Obligation in the general.

I. BY the Laws of Nature are meant those ſtanding rules of Life and Practice among men, which are of Natural, Unalterable and Eternal Obligation; or they are ſuch Laws and Rules of life, as to the breach of which there is a natural puniſhment annexed. For to ſay a thing is eſſentially good or evil, to call it by hard names, and to affirm that it hath a natural turpitude, or to paſs a Complement upon it, and call it a moral Rectitude, and ſuch like fine Scholaſtick terms, invented by men at leiſure to pelt at one another, for their own diverſion, that they may admire each other, and be proud of themſelves, without any real benefit or advantage to the World, without aſſigning a particular reaſon of intereſt, why we ſhould do the one or avoid the other, is as much as to ſay, a

thing is good for nothing, or it is bad, but we know not why, or it is good or bad for a Womans Reason, because it is; and this Reason will serve as well to prove, that Murder or Adultery are good things, as that they are bad ones; and such as against which no Laws can be too strict, nor any Punishment too exemplary, or too severe.

II. The Laws of Nature therefore have every one of them their Sanction in themselves; and in this appears the excellence of natural and of revealed Religion, that they oblige us to nothing as a Rule of Life and Practice, which, all things considered, is not the truest Interest of Mankind, and the Breach of which, without any particular Divine Judgment, is not sufficiently punished by it self: as on the Contrary in a strict and regular observance of those wholesome Rules, which God and Nature have tyed and bound upon us for the due Conduct and Governance of our Lives, we find the most perfect Ease and Satisfaction.

III. Neither is it any thing else that makes all kinds of Intemperance, whether in bodily Enjoyment, or in the Passions of the mind, unlawful, but that they are attended with so many, and so great Dangers, Troubles, and Inconveniencies to our selves

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and others, but that they are destructive to our Health; that they discompose the quiet and serenity of our Thoughts, that they are an Obstruction to Reason, an Hindrance to Business, that they make us useless and unserviceable to the World; that instead of procuring us Interest and Favour among men, they do always either excite their Contempt, or provoke their Displeasure against us; that they expose us to the want of Beggars, and to the shifts and contrivances of desperate men; that by the perpetual Tumult and Hurry of our Minds, they hinder our Communion with God, and intercept the gentle Influences of his blessed Spirit, wherein the highest Improvement of mortal Happiness consists; that they bring the whole World into Disorder and Confusion; and that as they do ever more begin in Folly, so they commonly end in Misery and Disgrace.

IV. And this is plainly the reason why the contrary Practices to these, are termed and accounted Laws of Nature, because they have their own Reward and Happiness annext to them, and because they have all of them quite contrary Effects to those I have newly mentioned, and tend all of them to the Good and Advantage of

Mankind in general, and of every particular person.

V. Charity to such as are in want, and Forgiveness to such as have offended, and an Universal Benevolence and good Will to the whole Creation of God, are therefore Laws as well of natural as revealed Religion, not only becaufe they procure us Friends and Alliances in the World, without which no mans life can be comfortable and easie; or becaufe they tend to the extinguishing all Quarrels and Animosities among men, which would otherwise proceed without measure, and without end to the unspeakable Disturbance of Mankind; but also becaufe they are owing to that calm Temperament and Frame of Mind, wherein the very Nature of true Blessedness consists.

VI. Lastly, this is the Reason why evil Appetites, as well as evil Enjoyments are forbidden, as well by the Law of Nature, as by that of Christ; becaufe Appetite hath no tendency, but to Enjoyment; and therefore if the Enjoyment be forbidden, the pampering and indulging the Appetite must of neceffity be so too. But the more immediate Reasons why all intemperate Appetites are forbidden, either by the Laws of Nature, or by those of Christ,

Christ, are these two. First, they are unlawful upon the Comparison, because they take our Minds off from those Thoughts and Desires, in which we find greater Ease, Contentment, and Satisfaction to our selves. Secondly, that being enjoyed, their Gratifications are already supposed to be prohibited and unlawful, and being denied Enjoyment, they are but a perpetual Pain and Torment to us, and therefore we are obliged not to give them Entertainment upon a Principle of Self-happiness, and Self-preservation, which is the very Root and Spring of all Obligation whatsoever.

VII. For there can be no Obligation, where there is no Law; and there can be no Law, to which there is no Punishment annex'd; for how can that Law be binding, which it is indifferent whether we observe or no? as it must be, if there be no manner of Inconvenience attending the Breach of it; as on the contrary, if there be any Dammage or Inconvenience accruing, then it is manifest upon the same reason, by which no Inconvenience makes it no Law, that it is purely that Inconvenience or Disadvantage, together with the Reward or Happiness annex'd to the Observance of it, in which the Sanction of the Law is found-

ed, and from which it becomes binding or obligatory to those to whom it is prescribed.

VIII. And so those are said to be Laws of Nature whose Breach is attended with some natural Inconvenience; as for example: Temperance in our Diet, Moderation in our Passions, Justice in our Dealings, Constancy in our Friendships, Diligence in our Employments, Sweetness and Affability in our Tempers; these are therefore Laws of Nature, because the observance of them brings very signal, and very evident Advantages to men; and the contrary Dispositions are partly for want of those Advantages, and partly by reason of many Troubles and Incommodities which they bring along with them, sufficiently tormented and punished by themselves.

IX. And this, when matters are examined to the bottom, will be found to be the true and only difference betwixt things necessary, and things indifferent, that in the first there is a Reason of Interest, all things considered, why we should chuse, or why we should avoid them, but in the latter there is not; for let an Action be never so indifferent, yet if any Reason, how small

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ſoever, can be aſſigned, why it ſhould be done rather than let alone, it ceaſes to be indifferent, and becomes in its Proportion neceſſary.

X. For all that is meant by neceſſary, is, not that a man cannot help it, or that he muſt do, or avoid ſuch an Action, whether he will or no, for this falls in with the Opinion of thoſe, who would have all human Actions governed by an unavoidable Fate, which deſtroys the very Nature of Indifference, as well as of Morality and Vertue; but by a neceſſary Action, as it is oppoſed to an Indifferent one, ſuch an Action is to be underſtood, as is more eligible to a Wiſe man, for a reaſon of Intereſt, to be done, than to be let alone; and by an indifferent Action ſuch an one is meant, as in which there is no manner of Reaſon to be aſſigned, why we ſhould chuſe one part of the Action rather than the other.

XI. Moreover, what hath been ſaid, may be ſtill further confirmed by a Reflection upon that Paſſion ſo incident to Mankind, upon the ſenſe of having acted amiſs, which we are uſed to call Guilt, Repentance, or Shame; which Paſſion is manifeſtly the extorted Confeſſion of Nature upon

upon the wrack, and is a ſecret acknowledgment within our ſelves, that we have done againſt our Intereſt, or that we have acted like fooliſh and unreaſonable men; and indeed our Repentance it ſelf would be the only thing that could be blamed, if that Behaviour of ours, which was the cauſe of it, could be juſtified by any ſubſtantial Reaſon, and certainly no better, or more ſatisfactory account of any Action can be given either to our ſelves or others, than that all things conſidered, we have acted moſt wiſely for our own Advantage.

XII. This is that which depreſſeth our Spirits, and robs us of our natural Cheerfulneſs and Vigour, that makes us hang down our heads, and fills our minds with ſo many painful Thoughts, upon the ſenſe of having neglected, or ſwerved from our Duty into the Commiſſion of that which hath the Appearance and Character of a Crime, that we are ſenſible we have acted fooliſhly, and that we cannot reconcile what we have done to our own Intereſt, or to the Intereſt of Mankind; we are out of favour with our ſelves and others, and being deſerted and deſpiſed by all that have any value for the Reputation of their Integrity or Prudence, we become forlorn, uſeleſs,

uſeleſs, and contemptible Creatures.

XIII. But when we do thoſe things, which are for our own Advantage, or for the good of the Publick, in which our own ſafety and ſecurity is included, this fills us all over with a ſtrange kind of lightſomneſs and jollity of Spirit; we are at peace with our ſelves, and as far as may be, out of all apprehenſion of fear or danger from others; we rejoyce in the conſciouſneſs of having acted as becomes wiſe and underſtanding men, and we are confirmed in our Opinion of our ſelves by the Approbation of our Neighbours; and by this means we are put in a Capacity of being as powerful and conſiderable among men, as our Condition and Circumſtances of Life and Fortune will allow; and theſe things I take to be a very plain Teſtimony of Mankind and of Nature her ſelf, to the truth of this Propoſition, That all Obligation is founded upon Intereſt, and that to do wiſely and wickedly, are things in themſelves, and by the unanimous Confeſſion of both Parties, the Innocent and the Guilty, inconſiſtent with each other.

XIV. From whence we may diſcern the Vanity and Folly of thoſe learned men, who

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are used to talk so loudly of essential Rectitudes, and eternal Notions, and I know not what phantastical *Idea's* in an abstracted way, whereas there is indeed nothing which is either good or bad meerly by its self, but every thing which is good, is good, that is, useful to something, and every thing which is bad, is so with reference to some Nature or other, to which it is more or less pernicious and destructive; from whence it follows (the nature of Obligation being a result arising from the Usefulness or Hurtfulness of a thing proposed to be the Object of a free Agents choice, with respect to that Agent which is conversant about it) that all Obligation must be not of a simple, but of a compound or a concrete Nature, and must always have an inseparable Respect to the Interest or Happiness of those, to whom that Obligation is binding. And it is not only true, that our Interest and our Duty are both of them the same, but that it is absolutely impossible any thing should be our Duty, which is not our Interest, into the Bargain; for no man can possibly be obliged to that, which, all things considered, will be to his Disadvantage.

XV. Yet I do not deny, that all the moral Vertues of what sort soever, whether they

they be Personal or Political, have an essential and eternal goodness in them, but not in that sense, in which some Learned men, more speculative & seemingly profound then wise, have taken it; for if you ask them why these things are good or evil, all you can get from them is, that these things are Eternal verities, and that they are as plain, as that two and two make four, or that out of nothing comes nothing, or that both parts of a contradiction cannot be true at the same time, all which propositions are plain in themselves, but to assign a reason of these things they cannot do it, and it is necessary they say that there should be some Propositions whose truth must be discerned by their own light, otherwise men would always argue backwards *in infinitum*, and there could be no such thing as science in World.

XVI. But though it be very true that all demonstration in its last result is to proceed *ab indemonstrabili*, and is to be ultimately resolved into some self evident Maxim, whose truth in its self must be every whit as plain and as evident to be seen, as the broadest Channel of the *Ægyptian* Nile, when it parts and divides it self into Seven several Streams, but in its causes as obscure and as

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little understood as the first source and fountain of that wondrous River. And though it be likewise true, that this is the very case of all those Propositions which I have newly mentioned, that they cannot be demonstrated by any thing more clear and evident then themselves, yet these Propositions as they are very plain, so it is no wonder to find all mankind to be agreed unanimously in assenting to them, because it is no mans interest to deny them, and therefore every man is willing to acknowledge his real sense and feeling of the matter.

XVII. But when you come to apply what hath been said to moral truths, you will find a manifest inconvenience, in asserting them also to be of the same Nature with Mathematical Maxims whose truth as it is the cleerest of all in it self, so in its causes it is the most obscure, or to give no better reason why these things are true, than only to say they are not false, or they are not bad, because they are essentially and eternally good, and the inconvenience you will run will be this.

XVIII. There are a great many in the World that have a mind to be Wicked, one would gratifie his Lust, another his Revenge,

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a third his Avarice, and a fourth his Ambition, by means which are generally thought to be Unlawful; and as there are some that would do these things, and therefore would be glad of any pretence to put a good face and Colour upon what they are about, so there are great numbers of such as have already been actually guilty, and these would be every whit as glad of any excuse to justifie and defend themselves.

XIX. And therefore when you would reprove and chide them for what they have done, or for what they intend, and yet all you can say for your self or against them is, that the rules they transgress are essentially and eternally good, that they are so because they are so, and because it is impossible it should be otherwise; this instead of arguing, is nothing else but bold affirmation and peremptory confidence, which may be turned upon your self, for they will tell you perhaps that the charms of that which you call Vice and Wickedness, are equal to those of Virtue, and that the essential rectitude, that is, the *quelque chose* or the *Je ne scay quoy* of both, are exactly the same, and that it is not only true what the Stoicks of Old were used to affirm that *omnia peccata sunt æqualia*, but also that

Monstrous

monſtrous Paradox may paſs for current, that *virtutes ſunt corpora*, and after all they will ſay, why do you trouble your head ſo much about Vertue and Vice, when for ought you know they are the ſame, unleſs you can aſſign a difference between them.

XX. And that difference muſt be taken from the effects, otherwiſe it will be impoſſible to make any ſtanding *Criterium* or *Tekmar* by which Vertue and Vice, either in the general or in particular inſtances, ſhall be diſtinguiſhed from one another; and if we will go this way to work, then I ſuppoſe it will be granted, that thoſe outward practices, or thoſe inward habits and diſpoſitions of mind, which do in their own Nature tend to the diſturbance of our own happineſs, or of that of the World, are vitious and morally evil, and becauſe the Nature of mankind is like for ever to continue the ſame, they are ſaid to be eſſentially and eternally ſo; and on the contrary by the ſame reaſon it muſt be acknowledged, that all thoſe inward affections of the mind, and all thoſe external or imperate activities that are derived from it, whoſe Natural tendency is to the publick or to a private good, without any damage or detriment to the publick that all theſe, whether practices or inclinations, are virtuous or morally

morally good; and becauſe in their own Nature they do, and will always ſo long as mankind continues the World, continue and perſevere to be what they are, ſo highly conducible and ſo abſolutely neceſſary to the good of the World and to the happineſs of particular perſons, becauſe they will always wherever they are found keep mankind ſteady and upright, and hinder them from doing wrong or injury to one another, they are ſaid to have an eſſential and eternal rectitude in them.

XXI. Further that this indeed is the meaſure by which we are to proceed in our diſquiſitions concerning Moral good and evil, that the intereſt and happineſs of mankind is the only true, and the only infallible touchſtone to which they are to be brought for Tryal, will appear from theſe three following conſiderations.

XXII. Firſt, If Robbery and Oppreſſion, if Rapine and Injuſtice, if breach of Oaths and Promiſes, if Betraying our Truſt, or Forfeiting our Word, and breaking through all the ſacred ties and obligations of Friendſhip, were things that were as much for the intereſt of the World as they are now againſt it, and tend only to bring us into

disorder and confusion, to make every mans Life unhappy and his safety precarious, and his fears endless: If intemperance were as much for a mans health, as it is now destructive and pernicious to all the useful faculties both of his Body and Mind, there is no question to be made but these things would be as Lawful and Commendable, as they are now worthy of Punishment or of Blame, because Laws are made for nothing else but only for the interest and well being of the publick; things that are manifestly destructive to this end they punish, about things that are indifferent or signifie nothing either way towards it, they do not concern themselves, and those things or persons that are useful and advantageous to the publick weal, the Laws and the Governors of all Nations, so far as these things can be adjusted by any common Rule or Measure, are used proportionably to encourage and reward; and though the other sort of Justice, which consists, not in the reward of Vritue, but in the Punishment of Wickedness or Vice, be that which is much more equally distributed than the other, yet the Measure of this Justice, being the detriment or damage accruing to the publick, and the proportion in which all punishments are inflicted, being altogether

ther governed by this measure, this is a Confession of all Nations and all Ages, that the measure of moral evil is the Interest of Mankind; and if all that is meant by moral evil, is, that in its own nature, or in its immediate tendency, it is hurtful to a particular person, or to the Commonwealth, then all that can be meant by morally good, is that, which by the consent and experience of Mankind is found to be absolutely necessary, or highly useful and expedient for it.

XXIII. Secondly, the same thing will appear from this, that there are some sort of Actions which are not always determinately good or evil, but sometimes one, and sometimes the other, as the Physical Action is the same, whether I kill a man *se defendendo*, or when his back was towards me, in cold blood, without any Provocation; but yet in one case the Law not only pardons, but commends the Action; but in the other it will be sure to revenge the Death of an innocent person with that of him, by whose unjust and cruel hand that mortal Wound was inflicted; and both of these things depend upon the same reason, because it is for the Interest of the publick, and because no man could be secure in any Com-

monwealth, where, upon an extremity he may not be ſuffered to defend himſelf, or where another with impunity may be ſuffered to hurt, annoy, or kill him without provocation; and yet theſe two Actions, though Phyſically the ſame, yet in the morality of them, they are extreamly different from, nay, they are directly oppoſite and contrary to one another; and ſo likewiſe if a man have carnal Knowledge of his lawful Wife, it is not only a lawful thing, but a Duty; but if he commit Adultery with another mans, it is ſo far from being a Duty that it is one of the higheſt Crimes that can be committed; the reaſon is, becauſe the firſt is for the peace of every Family, and of the Commonwealth; the ſecond is a cauſe of infinite Strifes and Quarrels between a man and his Wife, a man and his Neighbour, a man and his Friend; it is an Invaſion of that barrier and boundary of Juſtice, by which every man enjoys his own, and without which no Family can be ſafe, nor any Kingdom happy; it tends to the introducing a promiſcuous Luſt, and to the rooting out that ſhame and modeſty from among men, without which the Paſſions and Deſires of men will grow too ſtrong for the publick peace, and will by Degrees lanch out into all manner of Riot,

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Diſorder, and Exceſs; and yet the Phyſical Action of the *Copula Carnalis* is the ſame in the one Caſe as the other; wherefore this is another unanſwerable Demonſtration, that the Intereſt of Mankind is to be the ſquare and meaſure of Moral good or evil.

XXIV. But thirdly, the third and laſt thing by which I ſhall endeavour to demonſtrate that all Obligation is founded in the Intereſt either of men conſidered by themſelves, or as they are Members of a Civil Society, ſhall be this, that though it be true in the General, for example, That Temperance and Juſtice are indiſpenſable Duties, and ſuch as are of Moral and Eternal Obligation, yet theſe things are not true *in indiviſibli*, as the Schools are uſed to ſpeak, but there is a manifeſt Latitude to be allowed; for the ſame thing is not intemperate in one man, that may be ſo in another, by reaſon of different Conſtitutions, and different Habits of body; that may be neceſſary for one man for the preſervation of his Health, or for the carrying him with vigour and alacrity through his Buſineſs, which in another may be nothing elſe but the vicious Entertainment of his idle time, or the cauſe of Sickneſs and Diſeaſes to himſelf and of misfortune to his Family

and Relations; again, that may be a lawful Recreation by Wine, or Company, or Plentiful Feeding, or innocent and harmless Mirth after the Fatigues of Business, and to fit and prepare us for a fresh Encounter with the Cares of Human Life, which being constantly used, would be a sin, because it would tend to the Ruine of our selves and Families, and would render us either contemptible, or at least, useless and unserviceable to the World; and so also as to Justice, it is in the general, necessary, that every man should have his own, and, that no man should wrong or abuse another; but yet as to the particular Instances of this Justice, they are variable by Circumstances of time, and place, and person; they are determined by the Civil Law, or by a Court of Equity, where the express Letter of the Law will not give Relief: And to instance in no other Case, that of Prescription is very pertinent to this Purpose, where so many Years Possession shall give a man a legal Title, though his Ancestors came wrongfully by that which he enjoys; the Reason is, because, if all Claims were examined to the bottom, this might unsettle a Nation, and make a publick Disturbance, if all the Frauds and Abuses which our Ancestors have committed, or all the questionable

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Priviledges or Emoluments which they have uſurped, ſhould after a long term of peaceable continuance in the Poſſeſſion of them, be called into queſtion; and therefore it is better in this Caſe, that a private Loſs be ſuſtained, than that the publick ſhould be diſquieted by old and worn out Titles, and by Claims, which when they are ſifted to the bottom, will be found for the moſt part Vexatious and Diſhoneſt. From all which it is manifeſt, that Intereſt, either private or publick, is the ſole and entire Meaſure as well of publick as private Obligation; and that no other intelligible Principle can poſſibly be produced, that can at once explain and vindicate, as this will do, all the *Phænomena*, and all the conceaveable Inſtances that can be thought of, or alledged, wherein there is any thing of Duty or Obligation.

XXV. I am not ignorant, that it may be objected, becauſe I have not yet obviated that Accuſation, that by reſolving all Obligation into a Principle of Intereſt, I have cut the ſtrongeſt band of human Society in ſunder, and that is, the mutual Faith, Confidence and Aſſurance, which the Members of every Civil Society, for the good of the whole, and of every part of

it, ought always reciprocally to put in one another; but now, if Intereſt be the only Principle of Action, and if my own Intereſt be to be conſidered in the firſt place, both of which Propoſitions I acknowledge to be of undoubted and unqueſtionable Truth, then when ever I can cheat or defraud my Neighbour, if I can rob him of his Eſtate, his Honour, his Life, to reap a certain Advantage to my ſelf, without being diſcovered to have dealt unjuſtly and wrongfully by him; if a man abuſes himſelf or tempts another to joyn with him in any wicked Act of Intemperance or luſt in Idleneſs or Wantonneſs, and Miſ-employment of time, which might be ſpent to better and nobler purpoſes for our own good, and for the good of others; yet if this can paſs off without Notice or Obſervation, if we can commit the ſin, ſo as to conceal the ſhame, or hinder any notorious Prejudice that ſhall accrue to us, as a Conſequence of it; all this, according to my Principles, is lawful.

XXVI. But it would be more tolerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon*, nay, for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* themſelves at the day of Judgment, than for me, if this were my Practice of Piety, and my Whole Duty of Man;

Man; if this, and no more than this, were all the Doctrine of Duty and Obedience to the Laws of God, and right Reaſon which I pretend to teach; and therefore to this I anſwer, That thoſe ſins of ours, which are the moſt ſecret and concealed from the Eyes of man, and from the publick notice of the World, are yet notwithſtanding every whit as fooliſh and unreaſonable in themſelves, and as much, nay, perhaps more againſt our Intereſt, than thoſe which are more open and better known to the World; for the Diſgrace and Prejudice which we ſuffer in our Affairs, the contempt which is brought upon our perſons, and the Damage accruing to our Fortunes by a Diſcovery, are though not a Puniſhment ſufficient, yet ſuch as, perhaps, God upon our Repentance will accept as a Satisfaction and Atonement for the Crime committed; and are beſides, not unfrequently, a means of our Amendment and Reformation of life, which is the only true way of reconciling us to God, to men, and to our ſelves; but where the Juſtice of man cannot reach us, where no viſible Puniſhment purſues the Guilty, there it is more than probable, that the Divine Judgment and Vengeance will take place, it being very unreaſonable to believe, that that all-ſeeing Eye back'd and

and assisted by an Almighty Arm, will behold so much Wickedness and Presumption together, (when we please our selves with an Opinion that we are safe, because we can hide our Crimes from the Notice and Observation of men) without avenging it with that Severity and Justice which it deserves; and though God Almighty in this World should not visit us by any Supernatural Judgment from above, yet that very secrecy which is so sweet, that it gives a new relish and gusto to the sin, proves nothing but sorrow and bitterness in the end, and by being a Temptation to us to proceed in the same Courses that we have begun, the Consequence of this, is, That we are discovered at the last with so much the greater Infamy and Disgrace for having lain so long and so securely concealed.

XXVII. And as to the matter of Injustice or Oppression, let the Crime we have committed be never so secret, yet I hope it will be granted at least, that there is a possibility that it may come abroad; and upon that Supposition there are these following things to be considered.

XXVIII. First, if we be ever discovered, we do by this means proclaim our selves to be

be the common Enemies of Mankind; for he that will rob, defraud, or oppreſs one man, will do it to another for the ſame Advantage; and certainly no man can be eaſie in himſelf, when he is expoſed to the Curſes and Execrations of all that know or have any thing to do with him, no more than his Ear can be delighted with an unpleaſant ſound, or his Palate with an ungrateful taſte; and ſince the good Opinion of our Neighbours inveſts us with a real Power, and their bad one always renders us contemptible and weak, this might be ſufficient to perſwade us, for the ſake of ſome preſent Advantage, not to run the hazard of being obnoxious to the publick Juſtice for the preſent, or to the Contempt and Hatred of the World for all our life time after.

XXIX. Secondly, in all the Inſtances of injuſtice to our Neighbour, there is great danger of our being diſcovered, becauſe they have another perſon for their immediate Object, and ſo they do almoſt unavoidably betray themſelves.

XXX. Thirdly, though they ſhould be concealed, yet they fill us with perpetual Jealouſies and Suſpicions, we are always upon

upon our watch, afraid of our own thoughts, and our own ſhadows. And we are apt to read a Diſcovery in mens Looks or Expreſſions, who know nothing of the matter, till we betray our ſelves by a too ſollicitous care of keeping concealed.

XXXI. And yet fourthly, though we were never ſo ſecure of keeping concealed, yet is it a perpetual pain and diſquiet to a mans mind, to have been guilty of ſomewhat, which he dares not own, though the Jealouſies which attend all injuſtice could be laid aſleep, yet the Guilt of it cannot, that will be always preſent to our minds, and will perpetually interrupt the quiet of our Thoughts; for Baſeneſs or Injuſtice and Happineſs are incompatible together, neither is any man thoroughly at eaſe, who cannot juſtifie whatever he hath done to himſelf, as well as to others, but ſo much as he falls ſhort of perfect Innocence, ſo much he muſt needs want of perfect Happineſs alſo.

XXXII. Fifthly, it is impoſſible any man who is guilty of theſe Practiſes, ſhould be perfectly reconciled to himſelf, becauſe out of a ſenſe of his own Happineſs, and out of a natural deſire of ſelf-preſervation, he muſt

must unavoidably hate and detest them in another; and this is a most certain and undoubted truth, that no man can possibly be happy, who cannot approve his own Actions to himself.

XXXIII. Sixthly, either such Practices are grown habitual in any man, or they are not; if the latter, then the reason why he does not continue in the same bad Courses which he hath begun, is, because he feels some check and restraint upon his mind, and he is troubled for what is past; and for the same reason it had been much better for him, if he had never been guilty at all; for by happiness nothing else being meant, but a mind that is perfectly quiet and at ease from bodily pain, and from Discontent and Anguish in it self, it is manifest, that Guilt and Happiness are inconsistent together.

Non domus & fundus, non æris acervus & auri,
Ægroto domini deduxit corpore febres,
Non animo curas, valeat possessor oportet,
Si comportatis rebus bene cogitat uti. *Horat. Ep. l. 1. ad Lollium.*

But on the other side, if a man be hardned by a long course of sin into a desperate habit of persisting in it without regret, it is

is usually seen, that this is not done without abundance of violence to the natural grain and byass of his mind, and besides morally impossible, but he will some time or other be made a publick example of Punishment, Contempt, and Shame.

XXXIV. Seventhly, it is worth our while to consider, that such Practises as these are in their example pernicious to our selves, if ever they come to be discovered and known; for this is the nature of Examples, that they are more easily imitated, than they are given; and therefore whoever claims, or seizes, or possesses any thing unjustly, whoever deals perfidiously or falsely with his Neighbour, he does in effect but teach others to do the same by him. He does what lies in his power to corrupt and debauch the World into a state of Hostility, and publick Rapine, and to hinder himself from enjoying what he possesses with security and ease.

XXXV. Eighthly and Lastly, we are to consider that those injuries which are done to our Neighbour, do much more exasperate and provoke mankind against us, than those which we commit against our selves, these upon amendment will easily find

find forgiveneſs, becauſe none but our ſelves receive any prejudice by them any other-wiſe than by the bare example, which it is at the choice of others either to imitate or let alone, as they pleaſe themſelves, but when we wrong or abuſe another man, this makes all People for ever after to ſtand upon their guard, and to be very cautious of having any thing to do with us, for fear of being brought into a ſnare; they will never be perſuaded that the man hath changed his Principles, but he will always be ſuſpected, never truſted, wherever he may get any the leaſt advantage by deceit or by oppreſſion, and though his repentance be never ſo hearty and ſyncere, yet the memory of his paſt injuſtice will always be an incredible prejudice and diſadvantage to him, in all his deſigns and undertakeings. And what can be more raſh and inconſiderate, than for a man to part with his happineſs, which conſiſts in his own good opinion of himſelf, and with his intereſt, which is founded in the good opinion of others, upon any conſideration whatſoever, though ſeemingly of never ſuch preſent advantage, when it hath ſo much bitterneſs and diſquiet at the bottom? This certainly is a bargain much more fooliſh, than that unequal exchange of *Glaucus* and *Diomedes*.

Χρύσεα χαλκείων ἑκατόμβοι ἐννεαβοίων. XXXVI.

XXXVI. And as the disadvantages that accrue to men that have contracted a load of guilt by their injustice or oppression are great, the disquiet certain, the fears infinite, and the dangers dreadful to all that have not lost all sense of modesty and shame, which is it self a disease of human Nature, and is punished sufficiently by it self, and by the contempt and hatred which it certainly draws after it; so are the advantages that follow the contrary dispositions and practices every whit as considerable both to the publick and to particular persons; *Righteousness exalteth a Nation*, said *Solomon*, *but sin is a reproach to any people*; all manner of Vice, but more especially that sort of it which consists in want of Justice, Mercy, or Charity to our Neighbours, of Gratitude to our Friends, Duty to our Parents, Loyalty to our Prince, does as Naturally tend to the ruin of the Body Politick, as Poison and Diseases to that of the Natural, they are bigg with strife, and they go laden with nothing but Mischief and desolation, but Righteousness, that is, the constant exercise of all these publick Virtues, is that which makes a Nation great and happy, happy at home and great abroad, looking upon other Nations with a formidable aspect, and with a pleasing one upon it self,

Prov. 14. 34.

and

and as the perfection of these vertues running through all the Veins and Vessels of the Civil Body, may be called its utmost health and life, and vigour, so is the decay of them a proportionable sickness and disease, and the final banishment or total absence of them may be call'd its death; for it cannot certainly be doubted, if men were generally without pitty on the one hand and without gratitude on the other, but this must needs extremely loosen and unty the bands of human society, and produce a strange coldness and indifference in men to one another, if there were no Truth in mens words, no Faith in their dealings, no Security for the most perfect innocence from the malevolence of slanderous and calumniating Tongues, if not only our faults should be aggravated beyond their due extent, but even our best actions misrepresented, if Arbitrary Power were the only Measure of Action, and if neither any mans person nor his estate were secure from violence and rapine, it would be impossible that the World should subsist one moment, but all things must immediately run into disorder and confusion.

XXXVII. Again what hath been said of the Social or Political Vices, such as of

the immediate inconvenience of which, our Neighbour is the Object, the same may be said also of all personal enormities, or of those Vices whose immediate damage, separated from the blasting influence of their example, terminates in our selves, that they carry their own Punishment along with them, and though they be never so concealed, yet, for all that, my principles do not make them Lawful, for that only is Naturally Lawful which hath no Natural inconvenience attending it, and that is Naturally of the highest Obligation which carries along with it the greatest Natural recompence and reward, for as to that which is indifferent, that is, which hath neither advantage or inconvenience going along with it, I may do as I please and am by Nature left as undetermined, as the thing it self is, which is proposed to me, as the Object of my choice; but when on the one side it hath a Natural Punishment attending it, and on the other a Natural Reward, these are the Signatures and Indications of a Law, and these Rewards and Punishments proceeding not from the sentence of a mortal Judge, or from the hand of an Executioner, Bailiff or Beadle, but from the Immortal and Eternal Nature and tendency of things themselves, the Punish-

Punishment will as certainly tread upon the heels of the crime, as effects follow their causes, though no man else have any knowledge of it, or be at all sensible of those painful consequences of an immoral Action or a wicked life, which Nature intended only for the Offender himself.

XXXVIII. Intemperance and lust though smothered up in never so profound and deep a silence, will yet notwithstanding be sure to have their Natural Effects both upon our Bodies and Minds, and by that means they will betray us at last, though we manage our business with never so much cunning and though we keep our own council never so well, the Gout and Stone may tell tales though we hold our peace, and Dropsies and Consumptions will betray their own causes, and the sins of those that are affected with them, if it were possible, as it is hardly to be believed that it is that habituall wickedness should be a secret to the world.

XXXIX. But though our Vices should not prevail so far, as to bring any such painful or languishing disease upon us, yet

there are other Natural Punishments far short of this, that will express our shame, the dullness of a mans countenance, the inactivity and want of usual briskness in his mind, the decay of his Natural parts and abilities for business, or inquiries into truth, the dumpishness of his Spirit, the Dejectedness of his looks, the want of that courage, and Vivacity of Spirit which is the effect of innocence and the reward of it, these do at once betray and punish him, as well from abroad, as at home within himself; he loses his interest and gets disgrace into the bargain from without, good men shun him and even the moderately bad have no Delight and Pleasure in his conversation, and this is common to all that have been very guilty in any kind, but more especially of Treachery, Deceitfulness, and Injustice, that they hang down their Heads, they are ashamed of the Day, and afraid of the Sun, they dread the very appearance of a good man, and they take but little pleasure in the company of one another.

XL. For it is so ordered by divine providence for the good of the World, that as there are Natural Punishments even from without, that do as constantly follow wicked and unlawful courses, as the shade haunts the

the light or light follows the Sun, and Natural rewards, that are with no less constancy and certainty annext to every thing that hath the name and esteem of good and virtuous among men, so there is also antecedently to any of these outward effects, an inward calm and serenity of mind while it continues in innocence, there is a harmony and agreement between it self and Virtue, though no reward from without should ever be bestowed, it injoyes it self in the sense of its own Brightness and untainted Beauty; and there is a congruity between that and goodness, which being once broken, there arises presently a sense of pain, as troublesome and vexatious to the mind, as the breaking of a Bone or the dislocation of any Joynt or Member in the Body, the Soul is ruffled disturbed and discomposed, and the Musick being spoilt, to which it was used to dance, it hears nothing now but harsh and unpleasant sounds, which put it into a disorderly and unequal Motion.

XLI. Moreover, the same merciful and gracious Being, that hath with so much tenderness provided for the happiness of particular persons, by enduing them with such natural tendencies to goodness, after all the *Calvinistical* Declamations of the Pravity and

Beastlineſs of human nature, and with ſuch Paſſions as ſhame and Sorrow, and Repentance for the Puniſhment of our ſins, and for an Example to others, and for the reſtoring us to the primitive health and integrity of our minds, (it being but neceſſary, that the Wound ſhould be ſearched, before it can be healed) hath alſo endued every man, more or leſs, with a ſenſe of Pity and Compaſſion for others, of whoſe Sufferings we are made ſenſible by a certain Sympathy and Harmony of Nature, that we may give our ſelves eaſe by doing good, and that we may be helpful and ſubſervient to the Intereſt and Happineſs of each other; for God Almighty knew very well, that no man could ſubſiſt by himſelf, neither would it have been ſo much for the Happineſs of human life, that we ſhould have been able to do it, the Comforts of Friendſhip and mutual Obligation being far preferrable to the ſolitary Self-happineſs of an Independent State in any, but an infinitely perfect Being, who hath all Goodneſs and Bleſſedneſs in himſelf; and therefore it is certain, that when, upon a fit occaſion offered, we ſhut up our Hearts from relieving the Neceſſities of our Brother in Affliction or Pain, and ſtifle this Divine ſenſe of Pity and Compaſſion, which is moſt prevalent in Wiſe

men,

men, and which (if it be not wholly owing to that cause) is in part at least the effect of a Reflection upon the uncertainty of human Affairs, is at once a great sin, and a grievous Folly together; it proceeds from want of skill, in the true state of the World, and from want of a due Submission to that Almighty Will and Power in the person of our Brother, which may, when it pleases, inflict the same Calamities or Wants, upon our own.

XLII. It is very clear from the nature of things themselves, that there is a Connexion betwixt Hunger and its proper Food, betwixt Sickness and those Medicines which are provided by nature for its Cure; we have all of us the same Appetites, and the same Organs fitted and intended by Nature for the same uses; and therefore we must all of us be supposed to have a natural right to all those necessary Enjoyments, which tend to the Maintenance and Preservation of life, neither can any man pretend a right to Superfluity, that is, to that of which he is in no absolute need, or to that of which he makes no use, when the Necessities of his Neighbour call upon him to part with it for his Relief, for this is to abuse the Gifts of Fortune against the intention of Nature,

who hath provided ſufficiently for all, and intended, that all the Wants of her Creatures ſhould be ſupplied out of her abundant Store.

XLIII. Beſides, that thoſe Powers and Faculties which we find within our ſelves, as well of Body as Mind, were not deſigned by God and Nature meerly for our own uſe, but for the mutual Benefit and Advantage of each other, as is plain from this, That they are ſo plainly fitted for that purpoſe, as fit as the eye is for ſeeing, or the ear for hearing; and therefore he that ſeeing another reduced to any Extremity or Want, ſhall ſtand lazy and unactive by, when it is in his power to help him, does manifeſtly betray that truſt, which God and Nature have repoſed in him, by giving him that ſtrength of Body, and thoſe Faculties of Mind, which are ſo exactly fitted for the mutual aid and aſſiſtance of each other.

XLIV. Not that we are to ſpend our whole ſtrength, and to lay out all our Thoughts in a ſollicitous Proviſion for the ſafety or ſubſiſtance of others; for we are in the firſt place to conſult our own Happineſs, which is inconſiſtent with a too ſollicitous

licitous carking for our ſelves, and much more for others; and beſides, a very ſmall Proportion of every mans care and time will be ſufficient in order to this end.

XLV. Neither are we obliged to ſquander away our whole Eſtates in charitable uſes, becauſe they ceaſe to be Charitable, when we are ſo unkind to our ſelves; and becauſe an Univerſal Practice of ſuch Profuſeneſs, would introduce an equality of Order and Power, and conſequently an Univerſal Anarchy and Confuſion, into the World, which is very inconſiſtent with the Quiet and Happineſs of it; but it is enough in this caſe, if a man ſhall contribute ſuch a reaſonable *quota* or Proportion towards the relief of thoſe that are in want, as may be ſufficient, if imitated by others, in their ſeveral Capacities and Abilities of doing good, to ſupply all the real Wants and Neceſſities of Mankind; but if any man will do more than this comes to, ſo he do no prejudice to his Family and Relations, for *Charity begins at home*, all the harm he will get, will be, that he will have the greater ſatisfaction in himſelf, the greater praiſe from men, and the more exceeding Recompence of Reward from God, who ſees his Charity, and approves the Image of his

his own Goodneſs drawn in little by the Bounty of his Creatures and Servants towards each other.

XLVI. And if an evil day ſhould happen to overtake him, he will find, that this is but *caſting his bread upon the waters*, from whence it will be ſure to return again with plenty, and flow in upon him with a mighty ſtream; becauſe, beſides the Providence of God, which does not ordinarily fail to make a ſutable Proviſion for Virtue in Diſtreſs, and will not eaſily deſert or abandon him, who hath been ſo great an Example of Mercy and Compaſſion to others, ſuch is the nature of man likewiſe impreſs'd upon him by the Divine Wiſdom and Goodneſs, for the better preſervation and maintenance of his nobleſt Creature, that you ſhall find but very few, who have not ſome ſenſe of Gratitude about them, or who will not charitably and affectionately remember what we have done for them, when we are able to do no more for our ſelves; and therefore we ſhall be ſure to find, to our exceeding Comfort and Satisfaction, that the Alms and Charities which others have begged of us, will interceed on our behalf from whence they came, with an Importunity not to be reſiſted, and either

ther they whom we have relieved, will themſelves return the Kindneſs; or if they are not able, yet others will the ſooner do it for their ſakes; and the naked whom we have clothed, the hungry whom we have fed, the Kindneſſes and Civilities which we have ſhewn to all that have ſtood in need of our aſſiſtance, will plead more ſtrongly on our behalf, than all the crafty Rhetorick of the moſt importunate, and moſt practis'd Beggar.

XLVII. Wherefore all theſe Inſtincts and Paſſions of the human Nature, which I have lately mentioned, being ſo wiſely and ſo mercifully contrived for our own preſervation, and for the mutual aſſiſtance of each other, are plain and manifeſt Indications of a Divine Providence governing the World, and ſuperintending human Affairs; and therefore I am ſo far from extending this Principle of Intereſt no further than the publick view of the World, that I think, for any man to do ſo, is the moſt fooliſh and Unphiloſophical thing that can be conceived; for ſince we can neither look into our ſelves, nor abroad into the World, but we find all things ſo full of Uſefulneſs and Beauty, ſince there is Nouriſhment and Suſtenance provided round about us for our Bodies, and

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ſince the Organization and Contexture of our own, as well as of the Bodies of other Animals, is ſo exquiſitely fitted to digeſt and aſſimilate that Nouriſhment into it ſelf, ſince there is every where ſuch plentiful Proviſion made, not only for the Neceſſities, but for the Pleaſures of life, ſince there is in all Animals a natural deſire of maintaining and propagating their ſeveral Kinds; ſince there is ſo much wiſe Contrivance, and wonderful Curioſity in the ſpermatick or prolifick Parts and Veſſels for the accompliſhing the ends of Nature, ſince there is in all Creatures, not excepting the moſt ſluggiſh and inſenſible of Beaſts themſelves, a natural Tenderneſs and Fondneſs for the Preſervation of their reſpective Broods, which would otherwiſe be expoſed to Want and Hunger, to the Injuries of the weather, and to the ravenous Voracity of their fellow Creatures, of which ſo very uſeful and ſo neceſſary Affection, it is impoſſible to give any Phyſical or Philoſophical account, ſince there are ſuch Paſſions, as Pity and Generoſity, not only in men, but in their degree in other Animals likewiſe for the preſervation and aſſiſtance of each other, which Paſſions it is our Intereſt to gratifie, and we are uneaſie ſometimes to our ſelves, unleſs we do it, ſince there are

alſo in the VVorld ſo many Particular Friendſhips reſulting from an unaccountable Harmony and Agreement of particular tempers, by which mens minds are ſoftned and rendred more fit and pliable for Commerce and Society with one another, to the unſpeakable Emolument and Advantage of Mankind; what can be more reaſonable, than to infer from the Conſideration of theſe things, which it is altogether inconceivable they ſhould either begin, or be continued by chance, that there is a wiſe, powerful and gracious Being, by which this Univerſe is made, governed, and ſupported? A Being which is infinitely delighted, firſt, with the Exiſtence or Being, and then with the Happineſs and Preſervation of his Creatures; and that therefore upon the ſame eſſential Conſtitution of his Nature, by which he is ſo good and gracious in himſelf, he will much leſs ſuffer Injuſtice in his Creatures, thoſe eſpecially, which are not only the work of his hands, but alſo the Image and Reſemblance of his Nature, that he will ſeverely puniſh thoſe Vices, which tend to the Diſturbance and Diſquiet of the World, as all Acts of Injuſtice in themſelves, and in their Conſequences do; and that he will be ſure to reward thoſe neceſſary and uſeful Virtues, which tend to the Peace,

Peace, and Order, and good Government of it; and so it is usually seen, that Estates gotten by falshood and Injustice do seldom thrive, and that all notorious Malefactors are sooner or later made Examples of Divine Justice and Vengeance, to the World.

XLVIII. And the same is likewse very reasonable to conclude of Personal, as well as of Political Vices, because these by their Example are political too, and do a publick Mischief to the World; and because those natural Punishments, which are annex'd to Intemperance or immoderate Lust, are to be looked upon as so many Admonitions of Nature, and so many calls from the Divine Goodness, whose very Chastisements are an Argument of his love, to Repentance, and Reformation and Amendment of life; which Admonitions, if frequently resisted, it is very highly rational to believe, not only for the hurt we do our selves, but others too by our evil Example, that so much Goodness and Justice in Confederacy together, will not suffer such obstinate and unreclaimable Wickedness to go unpunished, especially if we consider, that our Souls, as all cogitant or thinking Beings must be, are of an immaterial, and consequently of an immortal and unfading Nature; and that if we carry a load of Guilt

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and Shame with us out of this World, we ſhall be ſure to bring it along with us into the other, which when the Divertiſements of Senſe and Company are over, will, without the acceſſion of any other Torment, be a ſufficient Puniſhment in it ſelf.

XLIX. And here is the great flaw in Mr. *Hobs* his Principles, who by not taking in the exiſtence of a God and of that Juſtice by which he governs and orders all things which he hath made, into his Politicks; hath deſtroyed the main Band and Cement of Obligation, and opened the Floodgates for a Deluge of ſecret ſin to enter in and overwhelm the World, nay, and the moſt open Villanies, if they can but be ſafe from the Juſtice of the Laws, or the Revenge of men, are, according to his Principles, lawful; whereas though it be indeed true, that Self-happineſs or Self-preſervation are the true, and perhaps the only Principles by which a virtuous or wiſe man ought to proceed, yet it is equally true, that upon this very Principle, no man ought to do any thing which is againſt the publick Intereſt and Quiet of the World, and which by wounding thoſe natural Inſtincts, and Tendences to Goodneſs which he finds within himſelf, are no leſs manifeſtly againſt his own; ſo cer-

certain it is, what the *Psalmist* tells us, that *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom*, that is, it is the foundation of Vertue and the very root and basis of all obligation; and therefore this is the true difference betwixt a Fool and a Knave, a Fool is he that doth not proceed upon any principle of Interest, at all, a Knave is he that does wrong upon a principle of Interest, but he does not take his whole Interest together, and so at the long run is a Fool too as well as the other, though in his own conceit he be wonderful Wise.

Psal. 111. 10.

L. I am really of opinion not only that all the Duties of common life, but all the duties of Religion too, are founded upon Interest as their only true basis and bottom, and that all things considered, it is very true that no man would be obliged to *fear* or serve *God for nought*, for as for love and admiration, the one of the divine goodness, the other of the excellence and perfection of his Nature, these are not properly Religious Duties, but things extorted from us, whether we will or no, by the loveliness and excellence of the Object we converse with, and it is the same thing proportionably in any other Object, beneficence and good Nature do unavoidably

unite and attract us to themselves, where ever we meet with them, and so does all excellence extort a proportionable wonder and admiration from us; only this indeed I do not deny, that it is our duty to contemplate much upon the Divine Wisdom and Power, and to indeavour all we can to enflame and kindle in our minds every day and hour a stronger and a more passionate Love for his goodness, and gratitude for his Mercy to us, but we are not obliged to this upon any other score than only because it is our interest, for God is a very pleasing object to converse with, a Noble Pattern for our imitation, and by meditating frequently upon the Power and Justice, as well as the Wisdom and Goodness of his Nature, the root of Obligation which begins in him and from thence diffuseth it self and sends an wholesome and refreshing sap through all the several branches and members of the Intellectual World, hath always the stronger influence and operation upon our minds, and produceth effects agreeable to it self in our lives and conversations.

LII. The remaining parts of Religion which have not been yet considered, are either Prayer for the good things we want, to him that is alone able to supply all the ne-

ceſſities and cravings of our Nature, or thankſgiving for what we have received, to him whom we cannot chuſe but love for all his repeated inſtances of unſpeakable goodneſs and mercy, (and in that very Love, we our ſelves find an infinite ſatisfaction and contentment) to him that can give us more, and to him that can withdraw when he pleaſes what he hath already given, or elſe laſtly it is Confeſſion and Repentance of our ſins to him whom we have Juſtly incenſed and provoked againſt us by the commiſſion of them, and who may when he pleaſes take the advantage of us and diſplay his juſtice in the Puniſhment of our Offences, as well as ſhow his Mercy by their Forgiveneſs, and that all theſe Duties are founded in ſelf intereſt cannot certainly be queſtioned, when it appears ſo plainly, that their only end and meaning is either to procure us ſome good or to avert ſome impending evil from falling upon our Heads.

LIII. This is all the harm of Idolatry and ſuperſtition, not that God can be bettered by any thing we do, or that any poor acknowledgments and praiſes of ours can add any thing to the bleſſedneſs and perfection of his Nature, but becauſe theſe two

two are the Diſeaſes of the mind, and tend very much to the debaſing of our Spirits by Servile flatteries, and cauſeleſs fears and it would be all one to God, what ſentiments we had concerning him, if it were not that thoſe which are the trueſt and the moſt like that being which they repreſent, are Naturally fitted to ennoble and exalt our Natures, and to make us good and uſeful men to our ſelves and to one another, and if it were not that Idolatry and Polytheiſm do ſo Naturally lead men to a beliefe that there is no God at all, and do by conſequence deſtroy the Firſt principle of Obligation, without a due regard to which it is impoſſible for human ſociety to ſubſiſt, and if it were not that ſuperſtition by pretending to appeaſe Gods wrath by trifling expiations and ridiculous rites, gives a kind of Licence to Wickedneſs in the World; and is it ſelf an indulgence to all manner of Vice, without the help of the Pontifical Chair, from whence the Pope diſpenſes Pardons among all that have Money to purchaſe them at his hands, and no ſin is ſo mortal as to be miſerably poor.

LIV. I ſhall conclude this diſcourſe concerning the Laws of Nature by ſhewing the uſefulneſs of thoſe Principles upon which I

proceed, by applying them very briefly to the three greateſt controverſies that our times afford, that is, to ſay, the matter of Ceremonies and ſet Forms in religious Worſhip, of Epiſcopal ſuperiority in the Government of the Church, and of paſſive obedience where active cannot lawfully be given to the Civil State.

LV. For the Firſt of theſe that is the Cerimonies of the Church, ſince it hath been proved ſo plainly that the Intereſt of mankind is the meaſure of Obligation, ſince it is neceſſary in all publick adminiſtrations whatſoever, eſpecially in the affairs of Religion, which ought to be carry'd with the greateſt gravity and decency of all others whatſoever, ſince men are ſo apt to fall out about theſe matters if they be not adjuſted, ſince all religious quarrels are of all others the moſt dangerous and the moſt laſting, ſince there is no end of excepting againſt Lawful things, unleſs it can be proved, as it is not pretended, that any of the things enjoyned are in themſelves Unlawful; from hence it follows plainly, though this or that Ceremony be never ſo indifferent, yet an uniformity in the general is of abſolute neceſſity, and this in a few words is an unanſwerable Juſtification of the Church

Church of *England*, and is much more in its defence then all its Enemies have ever ſaid againſt it.

LVI. Secondly, as for the Buſineſs of Epiſcopal Superiority, beſides that I ſhall prove elſewhere, That it was that very Government to which our Saviour himſelf, and his Diſciples and Apoſtles ſubmitted, though the Apoſtolical Pretenders of our days think much to do it. I ſay, beſides this, its lawfulneſs follows plainly from its neceſſity, for it depends upon the very nature of Government, which if a Subordination in the State be moſt for its health and ſafety, there is no reaſon why it ſhould not be ſo in the Church too; and you may almoſt as well ſuppoſe, that it would be the beſt form of Civil Government, that all Magiſtrates ſhould be no more than Petty-Conſtables, as that no Eccleſiaſtick ſhould be any no more than a Presbyter; and though it be confeſſed, that this is moſtly the Government in foreign Churches, yet it is certain, that upon many accounts it comes much ſhort of Epiſcopacy for all the ends of Government that can be aſſigned, for this Superiority, of Dignity, and Power, and Revenue, gives greater Encouragement to Learning, and greater eſteem to the perſons

of the Clergy, which it is for the Interest of every Nation, that they should be highly respected; it preserves the inferiour Clergy in a dutiful dependance upon those that are above them, and they themselves do seem the more venerable and worthy of Respect by the comely Obedience and Duty which they pay to their Betters; it is the best Remedy against Faction, the best Expedient against Heresie, and the farthest Remove from Independent Congregations, which are the very top and perfection of Disorder, and produce infinite and unspeakable Mischiefs both in Church and State.

LVII. Lastly, for passive Obedience, it is therefore a Duty in Cases, where active cannot be given, because the Inconvenience to Mankind is less than that of every mans being Judge for himself, and there is no *Medium* between these two, though they are at a great distance from one another; for the first is the height of Loyalty and Obedience, the latter makes Obedience it self a precarious thing, and is always upon the very brink and border of Rebellion, and this I think is in a short Compass, a very sufficient Answer to the late Infamous Writer of *Julian the Apostate*, who, I cannot wonder, that he is applauded by the *Calvinistical* Tribe

Tribe, for they that make God an arbitrary Being, and all human Actions to be neceſſary and fatal, are paſt obeying any, but themſelves, and may ee'n do and ſay what they pleaſe.

And thus much in General of the Laws of Nature.

FINIS.